

Remarks

Paragraph 2 of the Office Action mailed March 8, 2005, (hereinafter referred to as "the Office Action") rejected claims 3, 7 and 8 as unpatentable over Fackrell, et al., (hereinafter referred to as "Fackrell") in view of Keller, and paragraph 3 of the Office Action stated, inter alia, that, in regard to claim 3, Fackrell discloses "A deck (18) vertically adjustable attached to the frame (11), the deck (18) including a retractable segment (14, 16) and means (122, 124) for raising and lower the retractable segment (14, 16)." However, at the telephonic interview on May 27, 2005, the undersigned pointed out on behalf of applicant that the elements of Fackrell referred to in the Office Action actually describe the means for adjusting the height of the frame assembly (14) which supports a plurality of mower decks (18) and that Fackrell does not disclose a mower deck having a retractable segment (66) as shown in FIG. 3 of the application and described in paragraphs 15 and 18. The Examiner agreed. It is, therefore, respectfully submitted that the invention claimed in claim 3 is not obvious in light of the cited references and that claim 3 should thus be allowed.

In paragraph 4 of the Office Action stated, inter alia, that, with regards to claims 7 and 8, Fackrell disclosed a "... first hydraulic pump (108) and the first hydraulic motor (132) being mechanically connected to the first pair (165, 168) of ground wheels" and a "... second hydraulic pump (106) and the second hydraulic motor (128) being mechanically connected to the second pair of ground wheels (165, 167), as per claim 7." At the telephonic interview on May 27, 2005, the undersigned argued on behalf of applicant that Fackrell disclosed a mechanical connection to only a single wheel of each pair of ground wheels, rather than to both wheels of both pairs of ground wheels as described in the present application (see FIG. 2 and paragraph

Petravick pointed out that the language of claim 7 is ambiguous and could be satisfied by a mechanical connection to only a single wheel of each pair of ground wheels. The undersigned agreed with Examiner Petravick's observation and stated that claim 7 would be amended to make clear that what was being claimed was a mechanical connection to each wheel of each pair of ground wheels. This has been accomplished in the presently presented amendments to claim 7 by adding- - each wheel of - - immediately before "said first part of ground wheels" and also immediately before "said second pair of ground wheels". It is respectfully submitted that, as thus amended, claim 7 is not obvious in light of the cited references and should, therefore, be allowed. In addition, since claim 8 is dependant from claim 7, claim 8 should be allowed as well.

Paragraph 4 of the Office Action also stated that Fackrell disclosed a mowing device "Wherein the deck (18) includes a retractable segment (14, 16) and means (122, 124) for raising and lower the retractable segment (14, 16) as per claim 8." However, as discussed above, at the telephonic interview on May 27, 2005, the Examiner agreed that Fackrell actually does not disclose a deck having a retractable segment as disclosed and claimed in the present application. It is respectfully submitted that for this reason as well, claim 8 should be allowed.

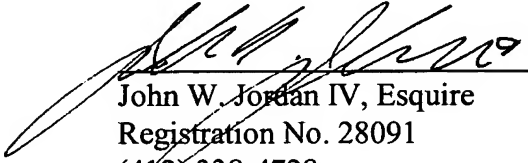
Paragraph 5 of the Office Action rejected claims 9 and 10 as unpatentable over Fackrell and Keller as applied to claim 7, and further in view of Taube. However, claim 9 is dependent from claim 7 and claim 10 is dependent from claim 9. Since, for the reasons discussed above, claim 7, as presently amended, should be allowed, claims 9 and 10 should be allowed as well.

In the process of reviewing the application to prepare the above responses to the rejections contained in the Office Action, it was discovered that, through a clerical error, the words "by remotely" had been inadvertently omitted between the words "controlled" and

"controlling" on line 21 of page 5 of the application. Paragraph 18 of the specification has, therefore, been amended to add - - by remotely - - immediately before the words "controlling right hydraulic pump 78". This amendment brings the quoted phrase into conformity with the similar phrase bridging pages 5 and 6 of the application.

For reasons discussed above, it is respectfully submitted that, as presently amended, the within application should now be allowed with respect to claims 3 and 7-10.

Respectfully submitted,



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